Operational Summary
Omaha District Tributary Reservoirs
July 19, 2001

Water Control and Water Quality Section
Hydrologic Engineering Branch

Executive Summary

- New Activities This Week: A sewage spill into Cherry Creek Reservoir closed the project to recreation on Friday, July 13. The spill into upstream Cottonwood Creek began on Thursday, July 12 and was halted on Saturday, July 14 after dumping 60,000 gallons of raw sewage into Cherry Creek Reservoir. The cause of the spill was a breakdown at a Havana Water and Sanitation district pumping station located two miles south of the reservoir. Rains on Friday and Saturday complicated containment of the spill. The lake reopened to recreation on Thursday, July 19, after tests determined bacteria levels had dropped to normal range.

  Evacuation of water stored in the flood control pools at the Jamestown and Pipestem projects is complete or nearly complete. Current releases at Jamestown Reservoir and Pipestem Reservoir have been reduced to 180 cfs and 500 cfs, respectively, for a combined total of 680 cfs. The pool level at Jamestown Reservoir dropped to the top of the joint use pool (1431 ft, msl) on July 8 and responsibility for determining releases shifted from the Omaha District Water Control Section back to the Bureau of Reclamation office in Bismarck. Despite the reduction in releases there continue to be reported problems with sewage backup in basements of residences along Pipestem Creek in Jamestown, ND. It is expected that these problems will gradually disappear as releases from Pipestem continue to be reduced and downstream groundwater levels drop.

- Pool Levels Above Flood Control Level: Pipestem Dam is the only project with a significant amount of occupied flood control storage. At Pipestem Dam, 5% of the flood control storage is occupied.

- Storage or Release Concerns: As releases are reduced at Pipestem and Jamestown Dams over the next week downstream problems should lessen.

- Flooding Concerns: Flows on the James River in North and South Dakota near the state line have diminished to a level nearly matching the combined release of 1250 cfs that was made several weeks ago from Jamestown and Pipestem Dams. Due to the extremely flat slope of the channel and limited capacity of the James River in this area, stages at a couple USGS stream gages are above the flood stage set by the National Weather Service. The stages at Columbia and Stratford are 1 foot and 2.5 feet above flood stage, respectively. The biggest impact from the high stages on the James River in this area is to impede interior drainage of farmland that was flooded from snowmelt last spring. As reduced releases reach this area in a few weeks lower stages on the river should allow adjacent farmland to drain.

- Drought Concerns: Water Control activities related to drought on tributary reservoirs are expected to be minor in the Omaha District.

Detailed Summary

- Jamestown/Pipestem: See attached James River Operations Summary and Bulletin.

- Tri-Lakes Area: Cherry Creek Reservoir is slightly above, Bear Creek Reservoir is slightly below and Chatfield Reservoir is 3.5 feet below their respective top of conservation pools.

- Papio/Salt Creek Projects: Reservoir levels are normal to below normal, with no significant flooding issues.

- Western South Dakota (Cold Brook, Cottonwood): No significant issues.

- Montana/Wyoming/North Dakota and South Dakota Bureau Projects: Most projects are generally far below normal. Since projects are not in flood control zone, the Corps is not regulating releases and the Bureau is handling all issues relative to the releases. Rainfall this past weekend resulted in a small rise in pool level at Shadehill Reservoir on the Grand River in North Central South Dakota. The small release of 140 cfs through the low level gate was shutoff due to the significant runoff below the project. Flows through the uncontrolled intake structure peaked at 530 cfs.